

Syrian opposition must unite

Says Arab League; Nato calls for political solution

AGENCIES

The head of the Arab League called yesterday for the fragmented Syrian opposition to unite and said a UN-brokered plan for a transitional government in Syria fell short of expectations.

Arab League Secretary General Nabil Elaraby addressed nearly 250 members of the Syrian opposition at a meeting in Cairo in an effort to coax the disparate groups to pull together, reports AP.

The gathering marked the first time the Arab League had hosted a gathering of the Syrian opposition, reports AP.

Meanwhile, Nato Chief Anders Fogh Rasmussen yesterday called on the international community to enforce a political solution in Syria while reiterating there would be no military intervention.

"The right response to this crisis remains a political response. And a concerted response by the international community against a regime that has lost all humanity and all legitimacy," Rasmussen told a news conference, reports AFP.

Elaraby said, "There is an opportunity before the conference of Syrian opposition today that must be seized, and I say and repeat that this opportunity must not be wasted under any circumstance."

He also said that UN special envoy Kofi Annan's new plan to form a transitional government in Syria to end the country's crisis fell short of Arab expectations.



A handout image released yesterday shows Syrian protesters holding caricatures of President Bashar al-Assad and Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi during an anti-regime demonstration in Kfar Nubul.

PHOTO: AFP

Turkey scrambled six F-16 fighter jets in three separate incidents responding to Syrian military helicopters approaching the border on Sunday, its armed forces command said yesterday.

The plan, which was accepted by an international conference in Geneva on Saturday, left the door open - at Russia's insistence - to Syrian President Bashar Assad being a part of the interim administration.

A Russian news agency reported that Russia will hold talks with two Syrian opposition groups and with UN envoy Kofi Annan later this month, after a weekend of stalled efforts to stop the bloodshed in Syria.

Deputy Foreign Minister Mikhail Bogdanov was quoted by the RIA Novosti agency as saying Syrian opposition leader Michel Kilo will arrive later this week, while Abdulbaset Sieda, the new head of the Syrian National Council, another opposition group, will visit Moscow after July 10.

Elaraby said the agreement did not meet Arab expectations because it did not specify a time frame for a "clear transition" as the Arab League had called for.

Syrian opposition groups have roundly rejected the UN-brokered plan, calling it ambiguous and a waste of time and vowing not to negotiate with Assad or members of his "murderous" regime.

Mexico's old rulers claim presidential poll victory

REUTERS, Mexico City

Mexico's old rulers claimed victory in a presidential election on Sunday, ending 12 years in opposition after a campaign dominated by a sputtering economy and rampant drug violence.

After pledging to restore order and ramp up economic growth, Enrique Pena Nieto of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) had a clear lead over his rivals in exit polls and a "quick count" conducted by electoral authorities.

Although his main rival said it was too early to concede defeat, the 45-year-old Pena Nieto delivered a late-night victory speech to cheering supporters, and a senior electoral official said the PRI candidate's lead was "irreversible".

"Mexicans have given our party another chance. We are going to honor it with results," a visibly moved Pena Nieto told followers packed inside the PRI headquarters in Mexico City.

Jubilant supporters waved banners sporting caricatures of their candidate and his trademark quiff, and confetti in the red,



Enrique Pena Nieto

green and white of the Mexican flag - and the PRI's colors - rained down inside the hall.

Outgoing President Felipe Calderon congratulated Pena Nieto on his triumph, which completed a dramatic comeback for the PRI.

With returns in from more than two-thirds of polling booths, Pena Nieto had 37 percent of the vote, more than four percentage points clear of leftist rival Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador. His lead was slowly widening as the night drew on.

Initial projections by Milenio television suggested the PRI had not won enough votes for an absolute majority in either the Senate or the lower house of Congress.

Pena Nieto's advantage was much less convincing than the PRI had hoped for, with most polls in the immediate run-up to the election showing he would win by 10 to 15 percentage points.

Having run Mexico as a virtual one-party state for most of the 20th century, it was ousted in an election 12 years ago and was seen by many as being on its death bed when it finished way back in third place in the 2006 presidential vote.

Taliban 'won't derail' us

Says Nato on death of British troops

AFP, Brussels

Nato Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen, condemned the death yesterday of three British soldiers in Afghanistan and vowed that the Taliban would not impact on the alliance's campaign.

Speaking at a news conference, the Nato chief presented his condolences to the families of the three and said an inquiry had been opened "to determine the circumstances."

The soldiers, serving with an Afghan police advisory team, were shot by a gunman wearing an Afghan National Civil Order Police uniform, the International Security Assistance Force said.

"At this stage we can't confirm that it was actually an Afghan policeman who turned his gun against ISAF soldiers, we can confirm that it was a man wearing an Afghan national police uniform," Rasmussen said.

"The Taliban has clearly laid out a strategy to undermine confidence in the Afghan national security forces, but let me also stress that they can't derail our strategy.

"Our strategy is to gradually hand over full responsibility to the Afghans and that process will continue and be concluded by the end of 2014."

The deaths on Sunday took to at least 26 the toll so far this year from 18 attacks in which Afghan forces turned their weapons against their Western allies.

Rasmussen also said he hoped that talks with Russia to transit non-lethal supplies through its territory from Afghanistan "can be concluded very soon."

Meanwhile, a suicide car bomb attack outside a university in southern Afghanistan yesterday killed at least seven people and wounded more than 20, officials said.

The attack happened in Kandahar city in front of Kandahar University, around two kilometres from the former compound of Taliban leader Mullah Omar, which is now used as a base by US special forces, provincial police chief General Abdul Razaq told AFP.



Anders Fogh Rasmussen

Iran drafts bill to block Hormuz

REUTERS, Dubai

Iran's National Security and Foreign Policy Committee has drafted a bill calling for Iran to try to stop oil tankers from shipping crude through the Strait of Hormuz to countries that support sanctions against it, a committee member said yesterday.

"There is a bill prepared in the National Security and Foreign Policy committee of Parliament that stresses the blocking of oil tanker traffic carrying oil to countries that have sanctioned Iran," Iranian MP Ibrahim Agha-Mohammadi was quoted by Iran's parliamentary news agency as saying.

"This bill has been developed as an answer to the European Union's oil sanctions against the Islamic Republic of Iran."

Agha-Mohammadi said that 100 of Tehran's 290 members of parliament had signed the bill as of Sunday.

Iranian threats to block the waterway through which about 17 million barrels a day sailed in 2011 have grown in the past year as US and European sanctions aimed at starving Tehran of funds for its nuclear program have tightened.

A European Union ban on imports of Iranian oil started

Chavez launches Venezuela presidential race

AFP, Caracas

Venezuela's President Hugo Chavez on Sunday staged a huge rally despite his lingering health problems as he and rival Henrique Capriles formally launched their campaigns ahead of October elections.

After 13 years in power, the firebrand Chavez is facing his first serious election challenge as he vies for a new term that would cement his legacy both at home and as Latin America's leading leftist in the post-Fidel Castro era.

Chavez -- who has been battling cancer for more than a year -- could rack up 20 years in office if he is re-elected on October 7 and serves out his full term.

Dressed in a jacket and his trademark red beret, Chavez kicked off his campaign in the town of Mariara in Carabobo state, where he was greeted by a red tide of thousands of supporters who chanted, "Chavez isn't leaving!"

He then left in an open-top truck -- part of a boisterous caravan that travelled 18 kilometres to the nearby town of Maracay, where he delivered a fiery 90-minute speech.

Putting on a show of force to naysayers who have raised doubts about his health, the 57-year-old president sang the national anthem a cappella, accompanied by some of his ministers, before launching into his address.

"I would like to first thank Christ the Redeemer for allowing me to get through this difficult year and be with the Venezuelan people to start this battle," said Chavez, who

Renewal for 2 more yrs

FROM PAGE 1

secretary-level meeting at Sonargaon Hotel yesterday.

The yearly allocation of Tk 5.5 crore that India provides for maintaining the routes has been raised to Tk 10 crore, he said.

An agreement for the protocol renewal -- effective from April 1 to March 31, 2014 -- will be signed this morning without any major changes or amendment. Its title will remain as it is, the secretary added.

Shipping Minister Shajahan Khan told reporters at his secretariat office yesterday after the Indian delegation called on him, "I can assure you that we're going to sign the agreement by upholding our national interest... we won't make any concession to India."

Asked whether the existing protocol is being amended to allow transit to India, the minister ruled out any such possibility.

The shipping secretary echoed the minister's view. "Whatever we do, our prime and topmost concern will be to protect our national interest... hopefully we will have more good news tomorrow [today]."

"Last year, there was tremendous pressure on me from different corners for long-term renewal of the protocol. Even our commerce ministry delegation at a New Delhi meeting urged me to sign the agreement for three years. But we renewed it for one year as India declined to accept some of our proposals," he claimed.

Hawladar led an 18-member delegation comprised of officials of the ministries of shipping, home, commerce and foreign and the National Board of Revenue (NBR). The eight-member Indian team was headed by its Shipping Secretary Pradeep Kumar Sinha.

Officials said India has long been pressing Bangladesh through diplomatic channels to renew the protocol at least for five years.

The water protocol is

under the article VIII of Trade Agreement, which the two neighbours first signed in New Delhi on March 28, 1972.

The protocol, which is usually extended after two years, expired on March 31 and remained operative under ad-hoc arrangement from April 1 to July 2.

Its renewal was delayed as Bangladesh refused the Indian proposal to extend it for five years.

Both Shajahan and Hawladar said the Bangladesh side succeeded in persuading India to extend the protocol for two years.

And the yearly maintenance has been raised to Tk 10 crore for the routes -- Kolkata-Chandpur-Pandur-Silghat, Kolkata-Chandpur-

Karimganj, Silghat-Pandur-Ashuganj-Karimganj, Rajshahi-Dhulian, Doikhawa-Sirajganj and Karimganj-Sherpur.

The two countries have five ports of call on each side -- Narayanganj, Khulna, Mongla, Sirajganj and Ashuganj in Bangladesh, and Kolkata, Haldia, Karimganj, Pandur and Silghat in India. A port of call of one side is meant to provide facilities to the vessels of the other.

The protocol is highly beneficial for the country as out of a total 310 vessels that operate annually 305 are owned by Bangladeshis, Shajahan Khan said. The vessels carry not only Indian goods, but also items imported from the neighbouring country.

NEWS IN brief

Kosovo to get full sovereignty in September

AFP, Vienna

The International Steering Group overseeing Kosovo's independence decided yesterday that the territory will acquire full sovereignty in September, Austrian Foreign Minister Michael Spindelegger said.

"The international supervision ends as of today," Spindelegger said following a meeting in Vienna of the 25-nation ISG, which includes several EU states besides Austria as well as Turkey and the United States.

In January, the ISG had announced that Kosovo had made such progress that the "supervised inde-

Jordan courting Islamists after Morsi's victory

AFP, Amman

Jordan is trying to woo the powerful Muslim Brotherhood after it gained more ground following the election of Islamist Mohamed Morsi as Egypt's first civilian president, analysts said yesterday.

Urging opposition Islamists to take part in early elections this year, King Abdullah II on Thursday ordered parliament to amend a controversial electoral law after they threatened to boycott the polls.

On the same day, he hosted Hamas chief Khaled Meshaal on his second official visit this year since his

Libya frees detained ICC staff after apology

REUTERS, Zintan

Libya yesterday freed four officials from the International Court (ICC) whose detention since early June on spying allegations had plunged the interim government into its biggest diplomatic controversy since last year's revolution.

The four were freed after an apology from the ICC, whose president, Sang-Hyun Song, traveled to Zintan for the release after weeks of pressure from the Hague-based court, the UN Security Council, Nato and the Australian government.



INDEPENDENT UNIVERSITY, BANGLADESH
MBA & EMBA
Admission Autumn 2012

Master of Business Administration (MBA)

- Finance
- Marketing
- HRM
- Banking

Eligibility

- 4-year Bachelor Degree or 3-year Bachelor Degree along with at least one year of work experience.
- A CGPA of at least 2.50 at undergraduate or graduate level.
- No admission test required if GMAT score is 500+.

Executive MBA (EMBA)

- Finance
- Marketing
- HRM
- Entrepreneurship Development & Management

Eligibility

- 4-year Bachelor Degree or 3-year Honour's Degree or a Master's Degree in any discipline.
- At least Second Class in all exams or a minimum CGPA of 2.5 on a 4 point scale.
- At least three years of continuous work experience as an executive.

Please Contact:
Graduate School of Business
Plot-16, Block-B, Bashundhara R/A, Dhaka-1229.
Room No- 2025. Tel: 8401645-53, 8402065-76
Ext- 254, Fax: 8401991 e-mail: info@iub.edu.bd

www.sb.iub.edu.bd

Special Feature

- All faculties have Ph.D. Degrees
- Subscription to online library (Proquest, Emerald, Jstor, Blackwell, EBSCO)
- Degree from IUB is accepted globally for higher studies and job placement
- State-of-the-art IT facilities
- Separate labs for Graduate students
- Teaching Assistantship
- 15% discount on tuition for IUB Graduates
- 15% discount on tuition (based on academic achievement) available at the end of foundation module
- 50% discount for siblings or spouses
- Payment of fees in installments
- Classes are held in the evening & weekends (EMBA)

Last date of Application: MBA & EMBA
Wednesday, July 11, 2012
Admission Test : MBA
Friday, July 13, 2012 at 10:00 AM
Admission Test : EMBA
Friday, July 13, 2012 at 3:00 PM

Form Sale:
All days of the week
from 10:00 A.M - 8:00 P.M



INDEPENDENT UNIVERSITY, BANGLADESH
M. Sc. Economics
Under Department of Economics
Admission Autumn 2012

Special Features

- All faculties have Ph.D. Degrees
- Subscription to online library (Proquest, Emerald, Jstor, Blackwell, EBSCO)
- Degree from IUB is accepted globally for higher studies and job placement
- Research oriented degree for students who will pursue higher education
- Teaching Assistantship
- 15% discount on tuition for IUB Graduates
- 15% discount on tuition based on academic achievement available at the end of foundation module
- 50% discount for siblings or spouses
- Payment of fees in installments

5 Full Scholarships Available:

- Based on previous academic record & admission test result.
- K & S Trust Scholarship amount worth Tk. 7,60,000.
- Stipend money of Tk. 60,000 per annum.

Please Contact:
Graduate School of Business
Plot-16, Block-B, Aftabuddin Ahmed Road, Bashundhara R/A, Dhaka-1229. Room No- 2025. Tel: 8401645-53, 8402065-76
Ext- 254, Fax: 8401991 e-mail: info@iub.edu.bd

Forms can be downloaded from
www.sb.iub.edu.bd

Eligibility

- Four-year Bachelor Degree or equivalent Degree from a reputed university.
- A CGPA of at least 2.50 or 2nd class at undergraduate or graduate level in any previous public examination.
- Students who have completed their B.Sc. or BBA in Economics or have a satisfactory background in Statistics and Mathematics are also eligible.
- Acceptable score in the IUB Admission Test or combined score of 1200 in GRE.

Last date of Application:
July 11, 2012
Admission Test (Written & Viva):
Friday July 13, 2012 at 10:00 A.M.
Form Sale:
All days of the week
from 10:00 A.M - 8:00 P.M.